Bus services between Calcutta and Dhaka

2623. PROF. (SHRIMATI) BHARTI RAY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken up the operation of bus services between Calcutta and Dhaka with the Government of Bangladesh; and

(b) if so, the outcome thereof and the time table for the starting of such a service?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL): (a) and (b) The question of transport between India and Bangladesh including bus service between Calcutta and Dhaka has been raised with the Government of Bangladesh. The subject remains under discussion between the two Governments.

Shortage of staff in Indian Missions abroad

2624. SHRI VIRENDRA KATARIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in many of Indian Missions abroad there is acute shortage of staff thus adversely affecting the working of the missions;

(b) whether it is a fact that in Indian Mission in Denmark, there is no commercial consul to specially deal with trade with Denmark; and

(c) the steps Government are taking to provide necessary staff and officers for improving the trade with such countries?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL): (a) to (c) The personnel needs of all our Mission/Posts abroad are kept under constant review and changes are undertaken wherever required. Commercial and economic work is a primary function of our Missions and depending upon the local requirements, these duties are assigned to India-based as well as local officers under the direct supervision of the Heads of Mission. The same applies to our Mission in Denmark where a First Secretary level officer supervises, *inter alia,* the commercial work. He is assisted by a locally recruited Marketing Officer and this arrangement has been working satisfactorily.

Bilateral agreement with foreign countries for the protection of emigrant worker

2625. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:
PROF RAM KAPSE:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering for bilateral agreements with other countries for the welfare and protection of the Indian emigrant workers abroad;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL): (a) There is no proposal pending with Government for a bilateral agreement with any country for the welfare and protection of Indian emigrant workers abroad.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The welfare and protection of Indian workes is ensured through regular contacts by Indian Missions with foreign Governments, Indian Associations and by providing free access to the Indian workers to approach the Mission in case of difficulties. In the event of a dispute, the Indian Missions, at first, try to resolve the differences between the aggrieved worker and the employer to arrive at a mutually acceptable solution. Wherever necessary, cases are taken up with the concerned authorities of the foreign Government to persuade the employers to redress the grievances of Indian workers. Where no alternative employment or any solution is possible despite best efforts of the Mission, all assistance is given to facilitate repartiation of the aggrieved worker.